

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 SAB-01 SCCT-01 EB-07 OMB-01

TRSE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 /098 W

----- 015887

R 101945Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6450

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 16155

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS

SUBJECT: PALESTINIAN'S POSITION ON ISRAEL

REF: CAIRO 9836

1. SAIQA'S ZUHAIR MOHSIN STATED IN FINANCIAL TIMES INTERVIEW FROM BEIRUT, APPEARING NOVEMBER 27, THAT PALESTINIANS WOULD "END THE STATE OF WAR" IF ISRAEL (THROUGH US PRESSURE) AGREED TO RETURN TO THE BORDERS OF THE UN PARTITION PLAN (OF 1947) AND ALLOWED PALESTINIANS RIGHT OF RETURN. THIS IS OF COURSE A VERY QUALIFIED WAY OF EXPRESSING READINESS TO RECOGNIZE ISRAEL.

2. FULL TEXT OF SHORT ARTICLE BY ALAIN CASS AS FOLLOWS:
"THE 1947 RESOLUTION BY THE UNITED NATIONS FOR THE PARTITION OF PALESTINE WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE PALESTINIANS AS A CONDITION FOR ENDING THE STATE OF WAR WITH ISRAEL, ACCORDING TO ONE OF THE GUERILLA MOVEMENT'S LEADERS.

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"MR. ZUHEIR MOHSIN, LEADER OF THE SYRIAN-BACKED AL

SAIQA ORGANIZATION, SAID THAT IF ISRAEL WERE WILLING TO WITHDRAW TO THOSE BORDERS THEN THE PALESTINIANS WOULD CONTINUE THEIR ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH A SECULAR DEMOCRATIC STATE BY PEACEFUL MEANS.

"IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FINANCIAL TIMES AT THE ORGANIZATION'S HQ IN BEIRUT, MR. MOHSIN, BEFORE FLYING TO MOSCOW WITH A 12-MAN DELEGATION TO HOLD TALKS WITH SOVIET LEADERS ON POLITICAL COORDINATION AND ARMS SUPPLY, SAID: 'ISRAEL WAS CREATED BY A UN RESOLUTION. THE SAME RESOLUTION CREATED A PALESTINIAN STATE ALONGSIDE ISRAEL AND DEFINED ITS BORDERS. IF THE AMERICANS FORCED ISRAEL TO RETURN TO THE BORDERS OF PARTITION AND ALLOW THE PALESTINIANS THE RIGHT OF RETURN, THAT WILL CREATE ACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS FOR A NEW RELATIONSHIP RESULTING IN A STABLE AND JUST PEACE.

"IN SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES WE WOULD END THE STATE OF WAR.'

"HE ADDED THAT THE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP NOW ACCEPTED THAT NEW MIDDLE EAST REALITIES DICTATED THEY ACHIEVE THEIR AIMS IN STAGES. 'WE DO NOT EXPECT TO GET HAIFA OR JAFFA NOW. WE BELIEVE WE CAN REGAIN THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP, AND THAT IN ITSELF WILL CHANGE THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT AND CREATE NEW CONDITIONS FOR THE NEXT STAGE.'

"MR. MOHSIN SAID THAT IF ISRAEL WITHDREW TO THE PRE-1967 BORDERS--RETURNING THE GOLAN HEIGHTS TO SYRIA, SINAI TO EGYPT AND THE WEST BANK AND GAZA TO THE PALESTINIANS--EGYPT AND SYRIA WOULD PROBABLY AGREE TO A NON-BELLIGERANCE PACT AND THE PALESTINIANS MIGHT BE FORCED TO DO THE SAME.

"'WE WOULD CERTAINLY BE IN A CORNER,' HE ADDED. 'AND UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE. BUT IT WOULD NOT BE A REALISTIC BASE FOR PEACE AND WE COULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO PREVENT INDIVIDUAL PALESTINIANS FROM SEEKING TO RESTORE

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THEIR FULL RIGHTS BY FORCE.'

"MR. MOHSIN'S STATEMENT IS ONE OF THE FIRST PUBLIC ADMISSIONS THAT THE PALESTINIAN LEADERSHIP WOULD ACCEPT THE "ISRAELI REALITY" AND HAS MODERATED IF NOT ITS ULTIMATE AIMS AT LEAST ITS APPROACH. ISRAEL WILL UNDOUBTEDLY REJECT SUCH TERMS OUT OF HAND. THE PALESTINIAN POSITION CAN ONLY BE REGARDED AS ENCOURAGING IF IT SERVES AS AN INITIAL NEGOTIATING POSITION.

"MR. MOHSIN SAID THE PALESTINIANS WOULD GO TO GENEVA BECAUSE IT DID NOT CONSTITUTE NEGOTIATION WITH ISRAEL BUT AN INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE. BUT HE DID NOT BELIEVE ISRAEL WOULD BE WILLING TO RETREAT EVEN TO THE 1967 BORDERS.

"HE REVEALED THAT A CONSENSUS WITHIN THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION WAS NOW IN FAVOR OF FORMING A GOVERNMENT IN EXILE SIMILAR IN COMPOSITION TO THE PLO'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. THIS WOULD INCLUDE A ROUGHLY EQUAL NUMBER OF GUERRILLA LEADERS AND INDEPENDENT PALESTINIANS
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FROM OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

"THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WOULD REMAIN THE SUPREME POLITICAL AUTHORITY AND A GOVERNMENT WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE TO IT, THOUGH IT WOULD CONDUCT ANY PEACE NEGOTIATIONS. A FINAL DECISION IS EXPECTED TO BE TAKEN AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AFTER THE DELEGATION'S RETURN FROM MOSCOW."

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